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An Essay.

1827

W. L. H.

On

Typhus Fever.

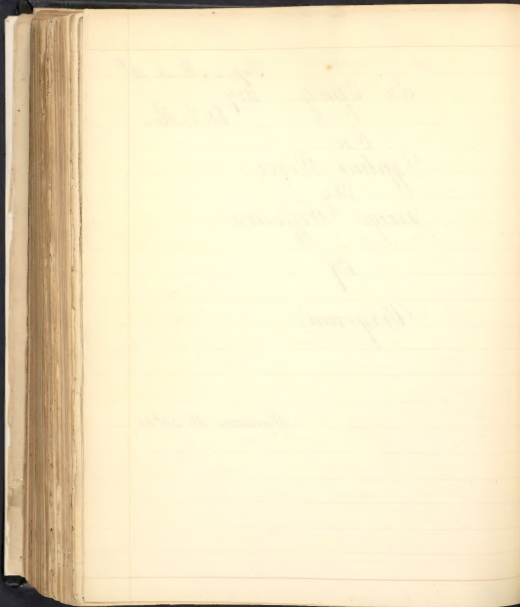
By

George Jefferson

of

Virginia.

Sansom St. N<sup>o</sup> 38

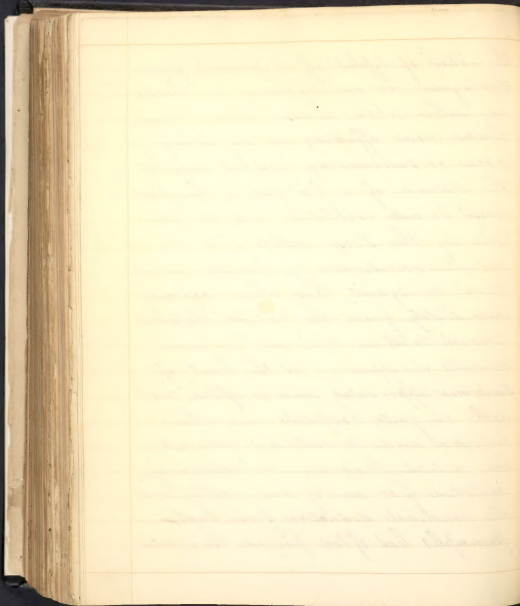


## Of Typhus Fever.

Typhus is derived from a Greek word, which signifies stupor, an affection of the sensorium, which occurs more or less in most continued fevers. The cause of this disease has been imputed to contagion, but whether or not it depend on this for its propagation, we will neither pretend to affirm nor deny. Dr. Chapman, whose opinion should be strictly attended to on every medical subject, appears to admit it as a fact to a limited degree. Whether it be contagious or not is a matter of very little importance as it will not vary the treatment to any considerable extent. Atmospheric influence may be brought forward as another cause of typhus, by which a predisposition may be induced in the system, and then brought into action by any of the exciting causes of fevers.

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(17)  
The action of typhus (if it proceed from contagion) we are informed by the same author, whom we cited also, is very limited, never affecting an adjoining room or surrounding person, only at the distance of a few feet, if the apartment be well ventilated; and we are told by the same author that the disease occasioned by fomites is much more malignant than when acquired immediately from the patient. Typhus prevails most in cold and temperate climates, disappearing as the heat of summer approaches, and is often met with in jails, hospitals and other crowded and ill ventilated places. This disease has been too commonly mistaken for one of real debility and the practical deduction from such principles has often proved the source



of the failure and apparent inefficacy of the healing art: whilst the inexperienced practitioner pours down stimulants upon stimulants to raise the system from that debility, which he conceives it labouring under, he finds that life recedes apace and at last he abandons every effort, and has the sad mortification to see his fellow being sink into the arms of death, which an opposite and well regulated treatment would have prevented. Doctor Armstrong divides typhus into its simple, inflammatory and congestive forms, but it is principally to the latter, that the following observations are applicable. In the first there is only a simple excitement of the heart and arteries: in the second there is an universal increase of heat and excitement; while in the third and last



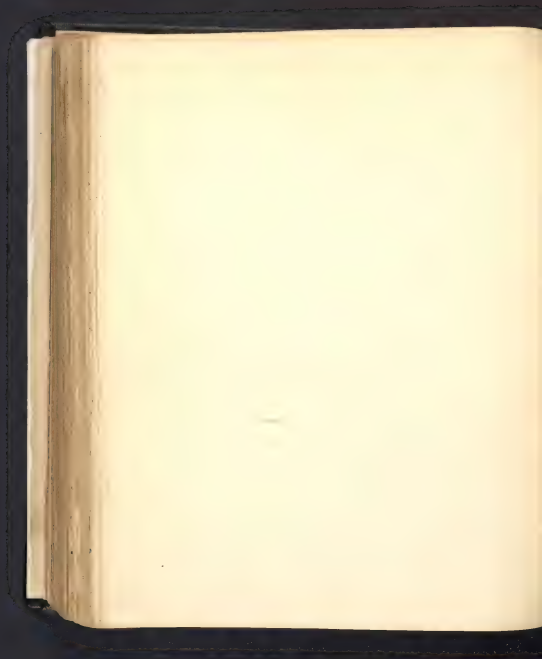


there are none of these phenomena present;  
 but the viscera are engorged and this  
 stage of the system is succeeded by a  
 general collapse without any regular ex-  
 citement: these constitute the only difference  
 between the several forms of the disease.  
 In the congestion typhus the remote cause  
 exerts so deadly an influence on the  
 nerves that the elasticity and energies of  
 the system are so overpowered and opp-  
 ressed by consequent venous congestion,  
 that it is not able to develop an univer-  
 sal excitement without the assistance of art.  
 The danger and difficulty of manag-  
 ing this disease will be in a direct  
 ratio to the degree of congestion and  
 the absence of reaction.  
 In cases of congestion the local ac-  
 cumulations of venous blood counteract  
 the common phenomena of febrile action,

*[The page contains approximately 20 lines of extremely faint, illegible handwriting, likely bleed-through from the reverse side. The text is too light to transcribe accurately.]*

and consequently there is either a total or partial want of fibrile heat whilst some parts of the body are interminably and morbidly heated, there are others, which are considerably below the natural standard - In consequence of this want or divided state of excrementitious blood is morbidly accumulated in some parts of the system, by which the functions and structure of some important organs or organs are oppressed and deranged - Such engorgements of blood may exist in different organs in the same individual, but we are informed that the large vessels about the right side of the heart, those of the brain, liver and spleen are most seriously and frequently affected -

In every case of congestion the balance between the arterial and venous systems



is disturbed in proportion as the congestion is greater or less. The circulation in the vessels of the surface is very languid, while the deep seated organs are engorged with a superfluity of blood and may not the fulness and distension of the veins be ascribed to the distension and fulness of the larger veins, as it generally rises after blood-letting, by which the energies of the heart and arteries are again brought into action: Not unfrequently "a congested is converted into an inflammatory state, and the cure is said to be by the pleuric chain—

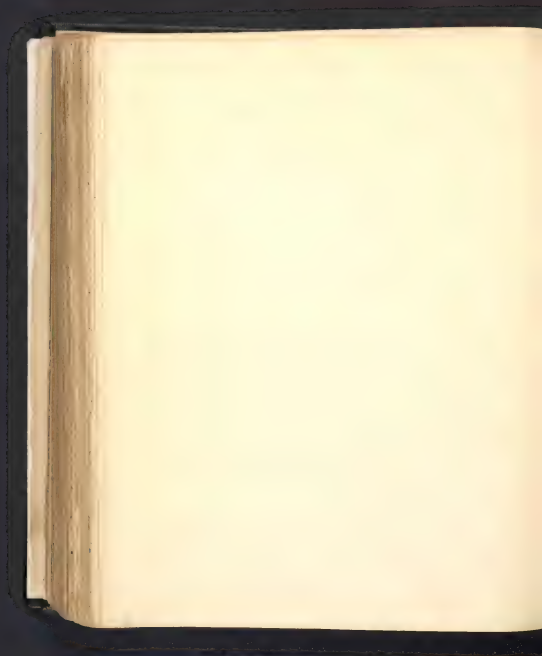
The same cause exerts such an influence on the nervous system and the heat of the surface becoming diminished there is a centripetal tendency of the fluids and the action of the heart being previously disturbed it can-



not know that of that extent and  
we could in consequence of this we  
could in person in a hospital from the  
year 1840 and this infant. When the  
accident was caused it there is a  
simultaneous death of my child in  
a place, and in the hospital  
I am a little bit of a child and  
that the accident was there as a child  
and

The brain is commonly divided into anterior and posterior, but other parts of the system by no means escape its changes. The spinal cord, brain, liver, stomach and intestines, &c. &c. are occasionally the seats of inflammation.

The friends of Freedom in England and  
the friends of the poor everywhere are  
now gathering round a new cause.



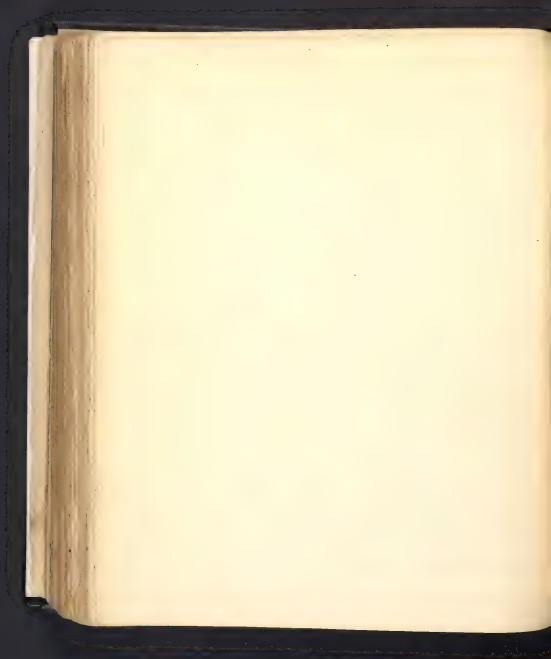


of the head points in the limbs but seen  
about the back, but somewhat cool and  
tense on the extremities with a determination  
to the brain slightly. Curious feature in the  
commencement Venous pulse corded weak.  
The limbs are generally very labile and  
the stools frequent dark and difficult  
but as the men advanced toward the end,  
are mostly loose and the stools cadent:  
some urinous diluted or contracted just  
before and finally death closes  
the dreadful scene of mortality. In more  
malignant cases there are frequent vom-  
itings from the gums and nose, rib  
itch &c. &c. The disease is delirium morose.  
At the expiration of some men anxious  
and difficult to sleep weaker and men  
brought the skin colder and of the stools  
and urine is white & cloudy. The  
case may be cancer and is surely indeed

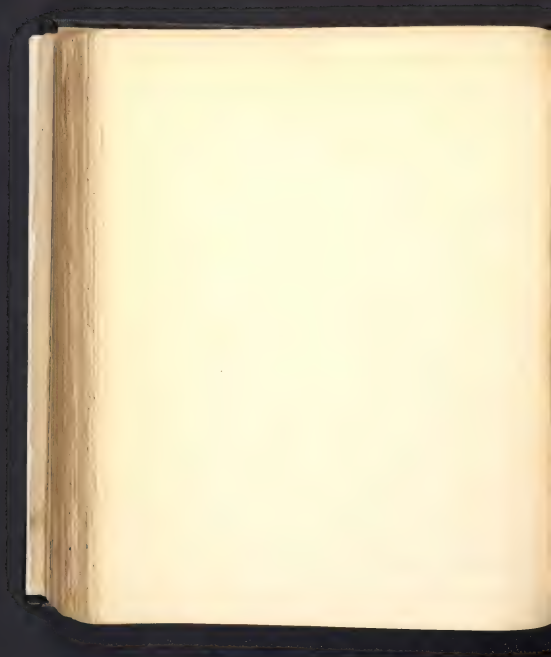


and will almost always terminate fatally,  
But on the other hand, in the earlier and  
decided cases, sometimes the disease lies  
in your and cedes the whole system and  
terminates with a warm skin a favourable  
conclusion may generally be drawn.

Treatment.— 'Early as possible have  
a stage of abstraction and cold  
water but this cannot be said of the  
whole congestion system in which the ab-  
straction is so great as to delay the surface  
reaction or render it even neutral and  
indifferent. In some instances of this form  
of typhus where the congestion is not so  
great the stage of abstraction is found to  
be that of exudation and the disease  
eventually runs its course under a simple  
or an inflammatory character. In con-  
gestion typhus debility together with unac-  
tion had been rejected in consequence of



the expected doubt and confusion, could  
not and ought not to be a subject of  
fear by undermining the talent engaged  
in its conduct and covering the little  
thread of law and fact on the great  
treatment, which was intended for its relief.  
It was in the instant, and the age of  
medicine was then the strongest doubt  
the strongly moved, and was now a  
general good - thing in this world.  
It must be continued in the commencement  
of an attack, it is with a reference  
to the great work and where the end  
is, being called it removes the local  
congestion and restores the circulation  
of the circulation in a wonderful man-  
ner. The quantity of blood to be drawn  
is considerable, but it is not to be regarded  
as the effects produced. Sometimes it may  
be drawn from the arm at intervals



seconds it rushed forth in a full stream.  
 When a sufficient quantity of blood can-  
 not be obtained from the arm to relieve  
 the engagements, it may be easily effected  
 in withdrawing the temporal artery. Longi-  
 tudinally and finally dividing it trans-  
 versely, till enough has been drawn by  
 which a stop is put to the loss of blood.  
 But if under the shoulder, the pulse should  
 become weaker, it is weaker than when its  
 employment it shows the inadequacy of the  
 shoulder, just as the rate of the pulse indi-  
 cates its propriety. If heat be over in-  
 creased, some warmth should be exhibited,  
 and the patient immersed in a warm bath  
 till it is removed from the bath the surface  
 should be well changed with strong  
 water, or some such stimulating, with and  
 rubbed with hot flannels till much blood  
 element is removed and then as may





generally. Here with impunity - from this to  
 state of the system, but it would be a  
 necessary to caution the practitioner  
 against the use of the lancet and to  
 consider the dormant power of the system  
 from that state of torpor in the means  
 stated above. Doctor Benjamin tells us of  
 a general rule, at the late of blood make  
 a decided incision on the head when  
 the venous blood is in all circumstances  
 this large bleedings should supercede  
 small ones by taking a small portion  
 at a time, or only partial the more arg-  
 ent symptom but in large bleedings we  
 exhibit the disease at once and a ring  
 it is a local solution. Although venese-  
 ction and the warm bath in L primary  
 importance we derive infinite advantage  
 from other means with the salome and  
 other ingredients together with a rub



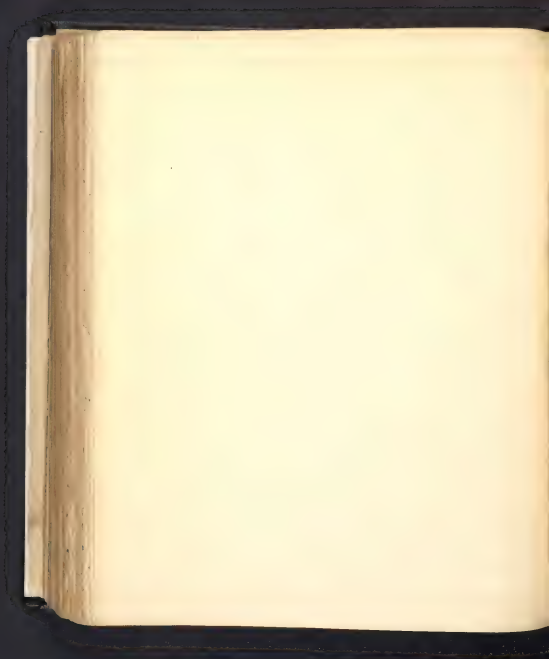
on the side of the stomach and liver.

The first thing, however, concerned in cases of congestion the serum exudation at first will generally be found abundant, dark and viscid and in many exhibited purgation in quick succession with a view of removing the abundant colour and odour of the exudation or the intestinal, but so long as there is any morbid constitutional condition of the system the action of the blood on the same remains morbidly increased and will continue to secrete such abundant exudation in defiance of the agency of purgatives until that morbid state or condition be eradicated.

However earnest our labours for the eradication of the morbid action may be, we must not defer it in order until the employment of the remedies is early and judiciously directed to in the disease a morbid



the use of stimulants is sometimes necessary  
in the treatment of the system in cases of  
anaemia and debility. The use of stimulants  
is not and should not be much abused  
cannot be employed on the principle of  
selecting the proper case for their adminis-  
tration. They may be also useful in the  
last stage of the disease, when it is  
then almost impossible to determine  
whether Doctor Chapman's theory of  
anaemia must and the carbonate of ammo-  
nia but particularly the latter from the  
action of stimulants is at all doubtful,  
as its action is more analogous to that  
of death. He says in the more advanced  
stage of the disease, when the  
increasing debility coming on he has  
derived great advantage from the use  
of such a stimulant as with stimulants  
and iron, has been successful.



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been represented as producing beneficial effects in this disease—

The brain though not the seat of this disease becomes often secondarily affected, and in this case it is of primary importance to shew the head and apply cloths dipped in cold water until in completely colden the heat from this measure we have had the pleasure to see the most decided and happiest results when there was a throbbing in the temporal arteries, and the heat about the head preternaturally excited. Here also cupping, leeching, and finally blisters may be beneficially employed, especially the latter when delirium exists. During the whole treatment the apartment of the patient should be kept cool and well ventilated and he should be lightly covered with bed clothes. The drink should be cool and taken in small quantities. During convalescence the

the first of the month  
the second of the month  
the third of the month  
the fourth of the month  
the fifth of the month  
the sixth of the month  
the seventh of the month  
the eighth of the month  
the ninth of the month  
the tenth of the month  
the eleventh of the month  
the twelfth of the month  
the thirteenth of the month  
the fourteenth of the month  
the fifteenth of the month  
the sixteenth of the month  
the seventeenth of the month  
the eighteenth of the month  
the nineteenth of the month  
the twentieth of the month  
the twenty-first of the month  
the twenty-second of the month  
the twenty-third of the month  
the twenty-fourth of the month  
the twenty-fifth of the month  
the twenty-sixth of the month  
the twenty-seventh of the month  
the twenty-eighth of the month  
the twenty-ninth of the month  
the thirtieth of the month  
the thirty-first of the month



diet should be strictly regulated. The patient  
 should be allowed nothing but what is of  
 a mild nature, such as the farinaceous  
 articles, gruel &c. and this in small quantities  
 occasionally repeated, as errors in  
 diet or a full meal will very often pro-  
 duce a secondary fever. The bowels should  
 be kept soluble until health has returned.  
 The employment of stimulants and tonics  
 during convalescence, we are informed is  
 generally decidedly hurtful and should  
 be abandoned in most cases as highly  
 prejudicial. The use of peruvian bark  
 is favourably spoken of by Doctor Chapman  
 in one stage of typhus. He says "There is  
 a period however in the progress of this fever  
 to be learnt by attention to the pulse and other  
 circumstances at which, bark may be introduced with  
 advantage. It is neither at the commencement nor at  
 the close of the case.

Geo. Jefferson  
 Va.

*[Faint, illegible handwriting on lined paper, likely bleed-through from the reverse side. The text is arranged in approximately 20 horizontal lines across the page.]*